



U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom Hearing

Refugees Fleeing Religious Persecution

Panel



Jenny Yang is the Senior Vice President of Advocacy and Policy at World Relief, where she provides oversight for all advocacy initiatives and policy positions and leads the organization's strategy regarding public relations. She also represents the organization's advocacy priorities to the U.S. government and leads mobilization efforts for churches on advocacy campaigns. She has worked over a decade in refugee protection, immigration policy, and human rights and is on an active deployment roster for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Jenny is the co-author of "Welcoming the Stranger: Justice, Compassion and Truth in the Immigration Debate" and contributing author to three other books.



Mark Hetfield is the President and CEO of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), a major implementing partner of the United Nations Refugee Agency and the U.S. Department of State, operating in 15 countries and resettling refugees across the United States. A frequent commentator and writer on refugee issues, he has worked for the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service and the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. Mark has previously held positions at the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service and the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom.



Leon Rodriguez served as the Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), from 2014 to 2017, following more than a two decade career as a prosecutor, law firm partner, and government agency leader. From 2011 to 2014, Leon served as the Director of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Civil Rights. Leon is an Immigration Attorney at Seyfarth Shaw LLP and a founding member of the firm's Immigration and Compliance specialty team. Leon also serves as the chair of Seyfarth Government Relations Policy Group.



Elizabeth Neumann served as the Assistant Secretary for Counterterrorism and Threat Prevention at the U.S. Department of Homeland Security where she led eight teams addressing a wide range of programs and policy including combatting human trafficking, Countering Unmanned Aerial Systems (C-UAS), identity management, screening and vetting, aviation security, Visa Waiver Program, and countering hostile nation states, terrorists and transnational criminal organizations. For two decades, Ms. Neumann has created and implemented multiple government-wide reforms. She served on the inaugural staff of the Homeland Security Council in the Bush Administration, supported the Office of the Director of National Intelligence and authored many foundational homeland security policies. She is currently a Senior Advisor to the National Immigration Forum and provides global security risk consulting services.



Murad Ismael is the Co-founder and former Executive Director of Yazda. Murad was part of a Yazidi delegation that held high-level meetings with representatives at the White House when ISIS carried out a genocidal attack against the Yazidi minority in 2014, and co-founded Sinjar Crisis Management Team. Murad has traveled around the world to create awareness about the Yazidi situation. Murad managed Nadia Murad's campaign for two years, which laid the foundation for her receiving the Nobel Peace Prize. Murad is originally from Sinjar and holds Master Degrees in Environmental Engineering and Geophysics from the Norwich University and University of Houston, respectively.